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No 2. VOL. 1
Jan. 10th 1921

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Thursday, Friday and Saturday.—Marjorie Hume in "The Duchess of Seven Dials," Super-British Production; also Larry Semon in a two-reel special comedy entitled "The Stage Hand;" "Around the Town," Current Events, etc.

The Pavilion Orchestra plays throughout the entertainment. Telephone: Mayfair 5112-3.

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Jan. 10th, for three days.—Tom Mix in "Flames of Flesh." All Star Caste in "Bleak House."

Jan. 13th, for four days.—Constance Talmadge in "A Virtuous Vamp." Sessue Hayakawa in "The Rajah's Amulet."

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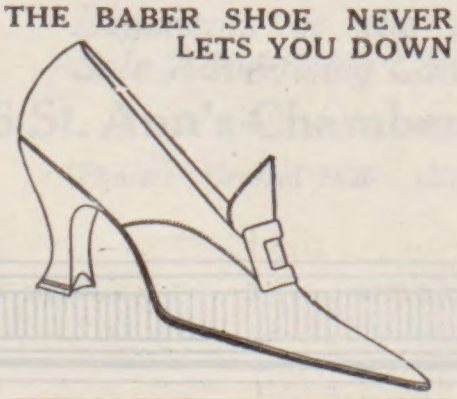

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C. H. BABER, Walmer House, 288/292, Regent Street, LONDON, W.1

No. 2. Vol. 1. January 10th, 1921

Movie-Land

THE BRITISH CINEMA WEEKLY DE LUXE.

Editor: MRS. HELEN SEVREZ.

EDITORIAL OFFICES: 4/6 ST. ANN'S CHAMBERS, BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.4.
TELEGRAMS: CHAPINSURA, CENT. LONDON. TELEPHONE: CENTRAL 9620

The Editor will be pleased to consider MSS., 1,000—1,500 words in length, on film, theatrical and dancing topics. MSS. must be exclusive and original, preferably accompanied by photographs, and stamped and addressed envelope for return in case of unsuitability. While the Editor will make every effort to ensure the safe return of rejected MSS., no responsibility will be accepted for their loss.

MORE OR LESS PERSONAL.

Mr. Cecil Bullivant's message, published in our first number, has been followed by shoals of greetings in similar vein. "Movie-Land" has been hailed as "the first really serious journalistic attempt to bring closer the British reading public and the patrons of the moving picture."

* * *

"An ideal train companion," is one tribute. "'Movie-Land,' like the screen itself, is apparently prepared to present most aspects of Art in its fascinating and distinguished pages."

And another: ". . . . What a relief from wedges of disconnected photographs and scrappy comments! 'Movie-Land' is indeed 'the film journal with an individuality'."

One reader is "overjoyed" that we have espoused the cause of the British film artist—and the British film. Another self-evident factor is the truly marvellous hold Miss Violet Hopson exercises on picturegoers' affections. Her "Talk to Film Aspirants" was obviously one of the most popular features of the first number.

* * *

Another correspondent, welcoming the advent of such giants of literature as Mr. John Galsworthy to the world of the film, confesses: "I had no idea there were so many big personalities in movieland, or that the thought-life behind the 'silver screen' was so vividly provocative."

Obviously, this quality of provocativeness can be stimulated immeasurably by the zeal of our readers, translated to the realm of practical discussion. The pages of "Movie-Land" are open to comment and suggestion from every source, as they are open to criticism. But preferably of the constructive order, please. There is still much to learn.

* * *

In the meantime, "Movie-Land," with the aid of the film experts who are giving us splendid co-operation, will institute in its columns an Information Bureau for correspondents in search of screen-knowledge in all its various branches.

Screen enthusiasts and aspirants, authors and scenario-writers, pioneers and creators, let us foregather in the forum of the film!

A NEW Studio Portrait.

ALMA TAYLOR,

the famous Hepworth Picture Player.

(Exclusive to Movie-Land.)

IS THERE A "FATAL LACK" OF WORDS IN MOVIE-LAND?

The "Lamentable Limitations" of the Screen.

HEAVEN save us from the ultimate pessimists who continually din into our ears the things that the film cannot do! They would lay the clammy hand of depression upon all progressive impulse.

All arts have their limitations; but it is sheer idiocy to insist upon them to the exclusion of more hopeful reflections. It is as though an artist should relinquish all hope of self-expression because the portrait he has painted cannot actually breathe, although it gives the impression of actuality.

A similar shortsightedness characterises those who would assure us that the film has a fatal lack in its inability to present to us the beauty of words. We are told that there are subtle shades of suggestion in the spoken word which it is impossible to convey through the medium of the film.

We are ready to admit that, in one respect, the lack of the spoken word does constitute a limitation to the possibilities of the film. But this is chiefly because of the loss of the beauty of sound, of the æsthetic pleasure derived from word-music, quite apart from the emotional stimulus provided by human enunciation which, in the case of the film, is largely compensated for by a first-rate orchestra.

* * *

The Hypercritical Pedants.

But the hypercritical pedants make a weak case for themselves when they assert that the film is unable to interpret adequately verbal descriptions of scenic beauty. What are words but the raw material of a mental picture? Is it humanly possible to appreciate vividly a description of natural scenery without having a definite *picture* in your mind's eye conjured up by the words you have read? How often do we use the phrase "Picture to yourself. . ." Is not this fairly reliable evidence of the ultimate use of words?

And so highly finished has the art of the film become, that there are few images conceived by the mind's eye which are untranslatable by the film. The eye of the mind is, indeed, by no means an infallible ally to our often groping and uncertain inner vision. So many images, in spite of eloquent verbal description, remain blurred and indistinct. Every subtlest impression on the film is sharply defined, and the gradual development of colour on the screen will inevitably make these impressions more and more realistic.

* * *

Exquisite Realism.

Moreover, we maintain that the film can interpret the spoken word in a manner which is impossible of achievement upon the "legitimate" stage. If the author speaks of "rushing water," the picture will show you the raging sea, with the white spray tossing up from the deep-curving waves. If he speaks of the "slow coming of the dawn," the screen has a miraculous power of showing the night shadows falling back before the lifting curtain of the day. If he tells of the horse that gallops across the sandy plain, you can see the beautiful animal stretching his gallant limbs and heaving his body on and on, right towards you, until you can see his nostrils quivering and his muscles working rhythmically; or galloping further and further away until he becomes a speck in the distance.

* * *

Futile Comparisons.

The stage cannot produce such effects as these.

Putting aside, however, all comparisons, which at worst are futile and at best scarcely constitute the "gamest" method of getting home your argument, it is obvious that the film is, in very truth, an eloquent interpreter of the spoken and written word. And when sub-titling becomes, in proper hands, a fine art that will eclipse for ever the unintelligible "Yankee" English, the uncouth illiteracy, the blood-curdling vulgarity and flowery flamboyance that have worked such infinite mischief in Movie-land, this eloquence of interpretation will gain proportionately in verity, in beauty and in subtle strength.

Hair-splitting Psychology.

It is questionable, after all, whether the public—even the most intelligent section of it—particularly hankers after the strained nuances of psychology that are incommunicable by the film. This is where the physiognomical eloquence of the screen actor or screen actress asserts its magic, to convey the subtle aura of a personality as accurately and as delicately as do the somewhat superfluously insistent hair-splittings of the "psychological" novelist. Ours is an age of speed; swift impressions, swift judgments, swift action.

But as we have said, away with futile comparisons. Poetry is poetry; the novel is the novel; music is music; the film is—the film. Can it contribute, as have the older mediums of art-expression, its quota of artistic perfection to the world? That is the question for unbiassed minds.

* * *

Universality of Beauty.

The magic of real beauty seeks limitless outlets. Beauty, being universal, demands universal expression. Movieland, in the opinion of many of us, has captured its own beauty by its own inimitable art. Surely our task is not the doleful cataloguing of its limitations, but an enthusiastic concentration on the increasing perfection of its absorbingly fascinating technique.

Frankly, we continue to regard with amazement the slow awakening of some of our most modernly avid minds to the established fact that the film is no longer a matter for cheap jest and sardonic raillery; that it is beyond all cavil the greatest social growth of our century.

One day, perhaps, the smug literary highbrows will awaken to the genius that has contributed to its evolution.

Meantime, we feel sure they would more easily reconcile their æsthetic consciences to the acceptance of the "filthy" lucre accruing from film adaptation rights if they would occasionally witness a good film, allow their great minds to play round the possibilities of the screen, and devote half-an-hour's solid thinking to making it more worthy of their fastidious art.

LILY ST. JOHN AND FRED LESLIE

In "A Night Out." They are now appearing in "The Naughty Princess."

Coming Gradually.

The theatre poster, though by no means not always so, is very often an artistic and decorative object. People have been lured into paying large sums for stalls at West End theatres simply by the sight of an attractive poster on an underground station when waiting for a train to take them home. The day will certainly come when the film exhibitor will follow suit and will begin to have doubts about the charm of the coloured photographs which at present do duty as advertisements of feature films. They certainly serve many utilitarian purposes. There is seldom any doubt about the name of the star artists, and the name of the film is large enough for all to see. But not even the most optimistic exhibitor could pretend either that these posters flatter the artists of which they claim to be portraits, or that they make any material addition to the beauty of our streets. The commercial advertiser realises that an attractive advertisement is needed to sell even the most useful article. The cinema industry might take a tip from business experience and see what attractive posters can do for really well-produced films.

THE FILM WITH THE FLEET.

By our Naval Correspondent.

IT is difficult now to realise just what the cinema meant to the officers and men of the Grand Fleet during those weary years of futile watching in distant barren harbours, where in summer there was no darkness and in winter but an hour or so of daylight. It was in a very real sense our chief link with the outside world, more vivid even than books and letters. That the naval authorities recognised the value of the cinematograph in amusing and occupying the minds of the men was shown by the exceedingly efficient film service (if that is the correct technical phrase) organised by the Senior Officers. The arrangements were in the hands of a Commander on the Staff, whose name has since become well known as an expert on naval affairs in general, and each ship had an officer charged with the duty of acting as film manager for the ship. I am speaking of big ships, of course, as there is no room in a light cruiser or a destroyer to swing a cat, let alone turn a handle. Those men serving in little ships used to come aboard their large consorts in the evening when work was done, happy, and exchanging those incomprehensible pleasantries common in the Navy. On the upper deck, usually by the casements of the secondary armament, a temporary auditorium would be rigged up of upturned buckets and planks, and the screen would be suspended from the midship turret guns. There on a summer's evening would collect the ship's company and their pals from smaller ships, and they would be shown the latest films from London. It was a very solemn gathering, for the bluejacket takes his pleasures sadly, and is only a gay dog when on shore, with a traditional reputation for joviality to keep up. The next night the films would be shown in the Officers' Wardroom, which was a far more lively entertainment. That sacred room would for a couple of hours be thrown open to merry and cynical midshipmen, who would mix with their seniors and keep up a running fire of commentary on the thrilling drama. I am afraid they were at times Rabelaisian, and the place would rock with laughter, grave Captains and Commanders joining in, when some wit relieved the tension of the film's climax with a well-judged jest. But there were other occasions when the Wardroom was a model of decorum, and the behaviour of the audience worthy of a Sunday school. A special film would be showing, and the word was passed round that the Admiral himself had expressed a desire to see it. A short "curtain-raiser" would be shown, and before it was finished the Personage would enter the darkened room, followed by his gold-laced staff. There was a general shuffle of feet, a benign gesture with an attenuated cigarette-holder, and we would sit down again, thankful that the Great Man had not tripped over our feet in the gloom. Our Admiral always came to see big historical films, such as "Intolerance," and Charlie Chaplin. One night when he was there and a splendid South African film, whose title I forget, was being shown, the door opened and a signalman appeared with a pad in his hand. He paused on the threshold, peering into the darkness, and one of the attentive Staff Officers beckoned to him. This was not an uncommon incident, but

the film was forgotten when we saw the Staff Officer pass on the signal-pad to the Admiral. What it was all about I do not know to this day, but in two hours' time we were at sea, and the next morning we were off the Danish coast in a damp North Sea fog. There was no splendid naval engagement to round off this incident, nothing but a comfortless cruise through enveloping mists, and a terrible all-night coaling when we got back to port. Such was the common lot of the Grand Fleet. I never saw the end of that film.

a very nervous and conscientious photographer, so concerned with his apparatus that he did not notice what was going on at the "Mailplane." As the flying boat was slowly hauled down the inclined slip-way, her captain suddenly re-appeared from inside the hull, gorgeous with gold lace, an enormous moustache, and a telescope, and his crew were transformed into a choice collection of Gilbertian sailors. Still the photographer kept on winding. Then, as the boat reached the water's edge, we were

Coming to the other side of the question, the taking of films, a famous authority on aircraft was to give a lecture to some learned society in London, and the Admiralty gave him facilities for collecting pictures at an East Coast Air Station. A giant Flying Boat, the last word in naval aircraft at the time, was prepared amidst an atmosphere of mystery. It was a long time before the secret leaked out, but when it was discovered, the personnel, both officers and men, entered into the scheme, and concocted a plan to make it a success, unbeknown to the film takers and the famous authority. On the day in question, the great flying boat was drawn from her shed, glistening in the wintry sun with bright metal and fresh varnish. Along her hull in huge letters was the inscription, "London-New York Royal Mail." Her crew, in flying attire, loaded her up with dummy mail bags, while the man with the camera got busy. He was amazed to see an agitated female in a hobble skirt rush down the slip-way and be hauled on board, showing in the process an alarming length of stocking. Nor was this all; for while the twin propellers were slowly revolving, Charlie Chaplin to the life, billy-cock hat, baggy trousers, and hooked cane complete, skipped down the slip-way, missed his jump and fell into the water, and scrambled aboard with the help of his walking-stick. Our roars of laughter at last attracted the operator with the camera, but it was not until the flying boat had taken the air that he had time to ascertain the cause. He took it good-humouredly, saying that it would have to go, as the Admiralty would not allow another "sitting." So this is the true story of the start of the first London-New York Air Mail, which is, I hope, preserved for future generations in some film museum. I often wonder what the learned society thought about it all.

A PAGE OF FILM CHILDREN.

MASTER CHARLES STUART BLACKTON, who has won early screen fame as "Little Peter" in his father's production of "Passers By."

And this is Charles Stuart's no less gifted sister, Violet Virginia, who was one of the little Belgian refugees in "The Common Cause."

TINY TWINKLES HUNTER (with Punchinello), who has appeared in numerous films. Her career is temporarily menaced by the long arm of the L.C.C.

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MASTERS OF MOVIES.

By Vincent Lawrence.

SOMEWHERE in the South of France there is a man who makes it his business to accommodate, in his capacious film studios, any wandering company that comes his way and cares to pay for the privilege.

He is a Frenchman, and his name is Louis Nalpas. He has erected magnificent modern studios in Nice, not for his own use, but for the benefit of enterprising film producers from other lands who wish to take advantage of the superior actinic properties of the Southern atmosphere, which is said to be as good, if not better, for photographic purposes than the climatic conditions of California.

In conjunction with his studios, which are all of glass, shielded on all sides by sun-blinds which may be adjusted according to the changing position of the sun, he has established an immense warehouse, which contains a comprehensive store of furniture, costumes and properties of the various kinds peculiar to different nations.

The first English company to appreciate the possibilities of such facilities are the George Clark Productions, Ltd., who left London for Nice about a month or so ago.

This company, which includes Ivy Duke, Douglas Munro, and Lawford Davidson, was headed by Mr. Guy Newall, their leading actor and producer, who has gone to Nice to complete his production of "The Persistent Lovers," which he started a little while ago on the Norfolk Broads.

He took all his " exterior " scenes on the Broads while the good weather held, and he has now forsaken the fog and rain of England for perfect weather conditions on the Riviera.

In this action he has set an interesting precedent for other British fog-bound companies to follow. Although about half the scenes in " The Persistent Lovers " have been filmed in England, and the balance will be taken in France, it is an essentially English story. The scenes he is filming in Nice are all English " interiors."

Mr. Newall is quite one of our most artistic producers, and his screen successes include " The Garden of Resurrection," " The Lure of Crooning Water," " Duke's Son," and " Testimony," the first of which will be showing in the picture theatres this month.

Not far away from Mr. Newall in Nice another artistically successful film producer is working, namely, Mr. Louis Mercanton, who is in Cannes directing his screen version of Sir Anthony Hope's story, " Phroso," the title role of which is being played by Miss Malvina Longfellow.

It is not too much to say that Mr. Guy Newall, of England, and Mr. Louis Mercanton, of France,

THE " BIG 3 " OF GEORGE CLARK PRODUCTIONS.
Centre, Mr. George Clark; left, Miss Ivy Duke; right, Mr. Guy Newall.

represent the future best of their kind in their respective countries.

Mr. Newall, from an artistic standpoint, has never made a mistake, although some of his stories, *qua* stories, albeit the work of well-known novelists, may have lacked a little in merit. Louis Mercanton has had two pictures shown over here recently, adaptations of Robert Hichens' " The Call of the Blood," and Jean Richepin's " Miarka, the Child of the Bear," both of which have won golden opinions from newspaper critics.

It will be a case of " Greek meeting Greek " when these two producers meet, as it is expected they will. Comparisons are odious and combinations seldom work, but if two such twin spirits were to get together, the producers of " Earthbound " and "The Birth of a Nation " might have to look to their laurels.

MISS SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER—AND MR. SMITHERS.

By George Woodham-Smith.

THAT "FAIRBROTHER" FINGER.

MY first impression of her dressing room at the Comedy Theatre was a large tea-pot and a cloud of cigarette smoke. Then, through the mist, there rose a very charming little lady, cigarette in hand, and I found myself shaking hands with Miss Sydney Fairbrother.

I sat down, and she gave me with one hand a cup of tea from the large pot and with the other a cigarette from an enormous box on the floor.

She smiled at me humorously and encouragingly through whirling smoke, and I took in her air of perfect mental poise as we talked for a minute or two of the stage and film in general, before I steered the conversation into more personal channels.

" Which do you prefer," I asked, " the films or the legitimate stage? "

"Oh! I don't really know," she answered. " It's so difficult to compare them. I have spent all my life on the stage, am so entirely at home there; and in comparison I feel that I know so much less about film technique. I love acting for the film, but I don't know so much about it. I know exactly what I am going to do when I walk on to the stage and what the effect will be, but I am never sure how an action will appear when projected on the screen. It's often a shock to see one's self on the screen, and I have sometimes said to myself, 'Do you really look like that?' "

" Do you find, though, that the cinema can help you in your stage work? "

She pondered a moment—and lit another cigarette. " Yes, I think so," she decided. "Certainly I have been to Trade Shows and seen myself do things I never dreamt I did; and I have realised when I thought about it that I did them on the stage as well. ' Now, Miss Fairbrother,' I have said to myself, ' that won't do; don't do it again,' and on the stage I can put the matter right. But that's one of the difficulties of the film. During the run of a play if I realise that I am doing something that could be improved I can pull myself together and put it right. When you see a fault on the screen it's too late. It's done.

"Then very often I have seen myself do a gesture on the screen and have thought to myself, ' Hello! That's quite effective. I'll do that again.' So I store the idea up to work off some other time. You don't waste a good gesture that way. The screen, too, helps to teach a proper appreciation of movements of the hands, an important point that the younger school sometimes overlooks.

"There are gestures, though, that I do on the stage which are not suitable for the film. One little thing I often do is to point a remark with a double movement like that——" and Miss Fairbrother wagged her finger in the inimitably droll way that is all her own. " That's too quick for the film, and makes a blur. I soon found that I had to do all my movements more slowly, and, of course, in a smaller space. It's not easy to do a realistically agitated

flutter in six foot square that in the theatre would occupy the entire stage."

" But what did you find most difficult when you first acted for the movies? "

Miss Fairbrother burrowed a little deeper into her chair, screwed up her right eye for a moment in anxious thought, and then slowly smiled. When Miss Fairbrother smiles, by the way, the whole room is a sunnier place. It is a whimsical smile of the infectious kind.

"It was not hearing my own voice," she admitted. " I found that I had become so accustomed to regulating my expression by the sound of my voice, that at first I found it hard to make my face work without the words. I got over that by saying things to myself."

Miss Fairbrother hastened to explain that nothing she said was to be taken as cinema dogma. She could only speak from her own experience. I murmured that that was what I was there to hear about.

"And do you," I asked, " find it harder to ' feel ' your emotional parts in the studio?" "Feel them?" she asked. " I never do. On the stage I am two entirely different people. There's the character—Mrs. Badger, for instance—playing the part and expressing the emotions of the type; and there's the other, me—Miss Fairbrother—standing detached in the wings, usually in the O.P. corner. ' No! That won't do? ' says Fairbrother, 'Come on; tense up! tense up! ' and Mrs. Badger, conscious all the time of the critical Fairbrother, makes the correction. Mrs. Badger may show fear, but Miss Fairbrother merely looks on and says, ' That's not bad, but tighten up those hands a bit.' You won't find me going off after an emotional scene and fainting in the wings. I can't get detached like that on the film yet, and that is why I need a helpful producer. You know," she went on, " I believe British producers are going to produce better films even than the great Americans. In America producers are too specific in their directions to their artistes. They tell them when to smile and how to smile, when to be frightened, and almost which muscles to move to show that they are frightened. The result is that they kill all individuality and produce technically perfect films, but with artistes, drilled and shouted into a type, who do exactly the same gestures in film after film. The British producer leaves more to the artiste, and so gets better character work. I think our films will be known for their characterisation."

" Madam, I have not eaten your canary."
(Mrs. Badger, in the " Young Person.")

I collected my hat from the coal-scuttle and made ready to go.

"Oh, but wait a moment," she said, " You have not seen the most important person in film-land."

She crossed the room and dived into a muff lying on the sofa.

" This," she said, " is Mr. Smithers," bringing forth a rather ruffled and very sleepy white rat with bright pink eyes half shut in slumber and an intelligent expression. He blinked his eyes lethargically in acknowledgment of the introduction.

" Mr. Smithers sleeps until about nine as a rule," she explained, " but he always comes to the theatre with me, and is a popular person in the studios. But," her voice sank to a confidential whisper, "he's a terrible drunkard. Drinks anything—beer, stout, wine, spirits, anything he can get."

Mr. Smithers looked a little hurt at this, and turned away his head. After all, no one likes to have his little weaknesses made a matter of public comment.

SCENARIOS IN BRIEF.

This Week's Pictures.

Amongst the best pictures to be " released " this week are the following :—

THE DUCHESS OF SEVEN DIALS..*Jury*
THE EVER OPEN DOOR.....*Ideal*
LADY NOGGS .....*Butcher*
WHOM GOD HATH JOINED.....*Gaumont*
PEGREEN .....*Vitagraph*
RED HOT DOLLARS.....*Paramount-Artcraft*
THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.....*Famous-Lasky*
THE RAJAH'S AMULET .....*Granger*
THE CRY OF THE WEAK.....*Granger*
THE BARTON MYSTERY.....*Stoll*
A VIRTUOUS VAMP.....*Walturdaw*

* * *

A good story, or even a good play, does not necessarily make a good film; in fact, the contrary is more often the case, yet producers seem more inclined every day to go to some popular theatrical or bookstall success for their plots. This week, as last, the majority of the most important new picture-plays of the week are merely screen versions of novels of which the story is already well known to the majority of the patrons of the picture-theatre.

* * *

First we have " The Ever Open Door," a film version of George R. Sims' drama of London life. It features Ralph Forster, Hayford Hobbs, Daphne Glenne, Terence Cavanagh, and Margaret Hope, and the action centres round an East End mission hall and other " slum-land " locations.

* * *

Then we have " Lady Noggs," a film produced by the Progress British Photoplay Company, and " released " by Butcher's, founded on the well-known series of stories by Edgar Jepson, which originally appeared in *Pearson's Magazine*. The audacious child heroine is charmingly played by Joan Morgan, the daughter of the producer, who also adapted the story for the screen.

* * *

" Pegreen " is one of Vitagraph's Western dramas with considerable touches of homely humour in which Bessie Love takes the principal part. It is quite a " nice " story to which any picture-loving " flapper "

EDWARD O'NEILL AND HILDA BAYLEY
In " The Barton Mystery."

can safely take her parents. It tells of a girl in a little Western village who lives to make others happy and succeeds in gaining happiness herself. It is taken from the novel of the American authoress, Eleanor Hoyt Brainerd.

* * *

" Whom God Hath Joined " is a domestic drama with romance coming as a destroyer of prosaic happiness, and an exposition of the French custom of parental " arrangement " of marriages. The acting of Paul Capellani and Mucelle Prudot, as the lover and the unhappy wife, is excellent, and the setting is admirable.

Sessue Hayakawa has a strong part in the film which Granger's are putting out this week, entitled " The Rajah's Amulet." It is the old, old story of " East is East and West is West "—or rather, as the author of the film puts it, " You may clothe the body

of the unfathomable East in the immaculately cut clothes of the West, but you cannot, by so doing, change its creed."

Fanny Ward has a strong part in " The Cry of the Weak "—the theme of which is somewhat reminiscent of " Mrs. Gorringe's Necklace." At any rate, the story is not so new that it would be fair to spoil anybody's enjoyment of the film by telling it here. Of its kind it is a first-rate film, well produced, and excellently acted.

* * *

Stoll's first release for the New Year is " The Barton Mystery," based on Walter Hackett's famous play of the same name, which, it will be remembered, deals with the subject of spiritualism, and one of the most thrilling scenes consists of a seance. In its original form as a stage play "The Barton Mystery" was one of the first of the recent craze for spirtualistic productions. " The 13th Chair " was an American play of somewhat similar type which followed it, and Miss Hilda Bayley, who plays the principal feminine part in the film version of " The Barton Mystery," appeared in both these dramas on the stage.

FANNY WARD.
In " The Cry of the Weak."

CONSTANCE TALMADGE AND CONWAY TEARLE.
In " A Virtuous Vamp."

" Mr. Beverley," the spiritualist, is played by Lyn Harding, with Edward O'Neil as "Richard Standish," and Eva Westlake as " Lady Marshall."

" A Virtuous Vamp," which is being released by the Walturdaw Company, is adapted by John Emerson and Anita Loos from Clyde Fitch's play, " The Bachelor," and features Constance Talmadge and Conway Tearle. It is quite an amusing comedy of its kind. " Vamp," in this case, is apparently Americanise for " flirt " or " flapper."

A Forlorn Hope.

The scenery in cinema plays has improved enormously during the last few years, and the Art Director is usually a man of imagination and perception. Seldom nowadays does Lord Vere de Vere sit in the lady's drawing room with a cup of tea in one hand and a stick of chewing gum in the other. And it is but seldom that a prehistoric Briton whiles away the time with a meditative cigarette. There is, however, one small thing that a number of regular cinema-goers are waiting patiently, in common, for the matter of that, with many followers of the drama, in the hope that sometime they will see. In ordinary life many a man must pass through thrilling moments of his life in rooms which contain telephones without having resource to their assistance. In a cinema drama never. If there is an instrument in the room the audience can place its last penny on the certainty that that telephone is there for use. The optimists are looking forward to that remote day when a scene will be acted in a room containing a telephone and nc one will so much as lift up the receiver. But why have the telephone, then? Exactly.

JOAN MORGAN

Whose film, "Lady Noggs," is now being shown at the cinemas, will shortly be seen in the leading roles in "Little Dorritt," "Two Little Wooden Shoes," "By Berwen Banks," and "The Road to London."

THE SUMPTUOUS CINEMA.

A Plea for a Middle-Class Film. By Herbert Furze.

ON my constant but irregular visits to different cinema theatres up and down the town and the country, one impression abides with me after seeing all the wonderful films now being reeled off by the league. All the prinicpal actors and actresses in the film plays live—and I might say also die—so expensively. Even when they are temporarily down on their luck, and awaiting the pleasantly thrilling turn of fortune's wheel which lands them socially Uber Alles again, they wear the most obviously expensive clothes, and their hats seem to have come straight out of the bandbox.

Only the other day I enjoyed the thrills and sobs and chortles of a first-rate film, in which the hero, one of the handsomest young gentlemen imaginable, was at one period of his film drama career actually reduced to selling matches in the street. And he was not doing it for the purposes of a bet, or private detective work, either, but from sheer hard-drawn necessity, having been handicapped by a wealthy but irrascible father with a University education and an expensive taste in restaurants and motor cars. I particularly noticed, when he was moving all the nicest flappers in that crowded auditorium almost to tears by the spectacle of such an eligible young gentleman hawking matches in the gutter, that he had a crease down his trousers.

Now I have never seen a match-seller in real life who had a crease down his trousers. Though I have seen one or two who had almost arrived at the pitch of having the crease without the trousers. My own impression is that, long before it came to the actual stage of trying to make a meal by hawking in the street, one would have parted with one's trousers' press. Trouser stretchers are among the very first things I personally, in times of real distress and abject penury, should catalogue as dispensable luxuries, and carry round the corner to some obliging Jew or Gentile pawnbroker. It is perhaps conceivable that the hero of this particular film had really done this, and that he was borrowing a pair of trouser stretchers from a friend of his palmier days, but, if so, the film dramatist should have introduced that friend. Because few men would be noble enough to lend even a film hero a favourite pair of trouser stretchers. An old safety razor, or defective fountain pen, perhaps, but certainly not trouser stretchers. It would seem too much like pandering to impecuniosity.

But the instance I have quoted is admittedly an extreme one. My contention is that the film characters as a general rule are too extreme in their sartorial modes. It is always either picturesque rags that no self-respecting tramp on tour would be seen dead drunk in, or brand new Saville Row, and twenty guineas a suit cash down at that. There is nothing in between sartorially. I have seldom seen on the film what one might accurately claim as a fair average representation of the ordinary citizen of either sex. By some most exasperating fatality the men, and the women too, seem always to be wearing new clothes. Perhaps there is a reason for this. As an old theatre first-nighter one is well acclimatised to the somewhat odd effect produced by the universal newness of all the dresses worn on the stage.

I suppose actresses and actors insist on wearing new clothes to start the run of a new piece with. Perhaps it is a stage superstition. In the case of the ordinary stage play this defect in realism is gradually made good. The brand-newness soon comes off the clothes. But the film actor and actress is always giving a first-night show. They are only photographed once in their rôles, however often the films may be shown. So the cinema player's newness never wears off. And it is rather fatiguing, to the ordinary dowdy citizen, in these days of still inflated tailoring prices, to sit even in darkness in a cinema theatre, and be perpetually put out of countenance by the most posh and expensive suitings on the film.

And if the effect is like this on a mere man, what must be the sartorial agonies endured by the ladies at the cinema shows? It must be frightfully bad for them—and for their fathers or husbands or whoever has to foot the custumiers' bills. Cinema producers ought to think of these things, and have a little consideration for their patrons in the one-and-threepenny seats. I do not recall ever having seen a really middle-class hero or heroine on the films. The only man I can think of who approximates to the ordinary middle-class sartorial standards is Charlie Chaplin. That possibly accounts partly for his immense and successful popularity on two sides of the Atlantic. No man, and especially no woman, likes to be made to feel mean and paltry in his or her personal outfit. It

would be positively unbearable if they did not turn the lights down during the film scenes.

Then look at the way these film characters live. The most luxurious hotels or flats every time, and everything even in the furniture line startlingly new again. And the way they dash about in motors, and always motors of the most expensive kind, too. If a film hero or heroine wants to cross the road to post a letter, it's a taxi every time. Even the film servants never seem to patronise anything but the most exclusive tailors and hatters and costumiers, and never dream of economising, even in these ruinously expensive days, by trying a cheap second-hand reach-me-down establishment for a change. It is impossible to blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the E.P.D. for this, because it was just the same before the war.

It would be a real treat to see some film character—a hero or an important and serious person in the drama, mind you, and not merely a low comedy character—in a baggy pair of pants or a coat a trifle frayed at the cuff or shiny at the elbow. And a film actress in a big part, with a hole or even a wrinkle in her expensive silk hose, would be like a soda-fountain in the Sahara.

But the fact of the matter is this brand-newness of clothes and appurtenances is become a film convention. Can't we have an occasional middle-class film? Let the hero show that he really is a hero, and stalk on boldly with uncreased trousers, and even with that slight bagginess at the knee which, entirely *entre nous*, is quite characteristic in these days of people like the present Prime Minister, or Mr. Bonar Law, or the Lord Chief Justice in his week-end mufti, or even Mr. Owen Nares, when the flappers cease to flap, and he is, so to speak, incognito and comfy. I belong as a relic of pre-war times to a club that is much too expensive for me really. And when I look carefully around there, and take stock of the members, some of them wealthy and famous magnates, I find not one of them hardly who could possibly " go on the films " as he stands or sits in his ordinary every-day togs. He would look like a dustman at a soirée.

And why not let some of the eminent film artists walk a little occasionally? It's a splendid thing for preserving the figure and toning up the nerves. Or, if walking is technically impossible; as being too slow, what about an occasional 'bus ride? I once rode up Whitehall inside a 'bus in which Lord Jellicoe and Earl Beatty were straphanging. Surely what's good enough for real peers of the realm and Admirals of the Fleet to boot, is good enough on occasion for the " movies " !

I don't ask that the cinema should become down-at-heel and threadbare sartorially, or even that it should altogether abandon its splendid poshness, but I do plead for just a little dowdiness occasionally. It would make for greater realism on the film, and greater tranquility in the stalls. In fact, pity the poor bourgeoisie !

UNA FLEMING,
In " The Sweetheart Shop," a successful " Knickerbocker " production.

ADAPTING THE NOVEL TO THE BRITISH FILM.

An interview with Cecil Henry Bullivant. By V. E. Dismore.

MR. CECIL H. BULLIVANT.

ONE of the most popular serial novelists in the world, and well on the way towards becoming its most popular writer for the film! This is the enviable reputation of Cecil Henry Bullivant, whose successful novel, "Blood Money," is one of a series of nine great movie-plays (of which "The Skin Game," reviewed last week, was another) now being produced by Messrs. Granger. This makes the sixth Bullivant novel to be filmed.

Mr. Bullivant's first venture into movieland was with his widely-read novel, "Whose Wife?" published in book form by Herbert Jenkins, serialised and dramatised in America and turned into a movie-play by the American Film Corporation of Chicago, with Gail Kane as star. Since that time British film producers have been waking up to the fact that what the British public wants is screen stories by British authors, not anæmic plots and fulsome sensationalism by overworked and over-productive trans-Atlantic writers, much as we are indebted to America on many "movie" counts.

This is the opinion of Mr. Cecil Henry Bullivant, who is a vigorous advocate of novel adaptation for the film. Most movie-lovers will remember the agitation that took place a short time ago for the introduction of an entirely individualistic art for movieland, to the partial or entire exclusion of the adapted novel. Mr. Bullivant holds that only from a novel or play is it possible to introduce that intimately realistic touch which is essential to grip the attention of an audience. The movie actor must study something more than the mere movement of a plot; he must become familiar with the psychology of the character he represents. He himself must have his imagination fired before he can arouse that of his audience; and an original scenario fails to provide the necessary material. The business of the scenario writer is to indicate movement; he is not a psycho-analyst. That part of the business must be left to the author. The truth of this may be seen in the failure of certain elaborate spectacular plays specially written for the film. They were unconvincing, and audiences were puzzled or merely amused by them when they should have been impressed.

It is for this reason that Mr. Bullivant is a staunch upholder of author and producer co-operation. Each, he believes, should learn from the other, and each should respect the peculiarities of the other's craft. He holds that authors who would succeed on the film must keep that object in mind in writing their novels. A good story does not necessarily film well. Here are his own words:—

"The author should study the technique of the studio. He should get hold of the original script which the scenario writer writes, compare it with his own, see in what direction it differs, and bear this in mind in writing future stories.

"I think one of the reasons why so few British writers to-day are taking any great interest in films is because their work is out of sympathy with the needs of film producers, and they won't take the trouble to find out what is necessary for a successful picture. My experience has been that, at any rate so far as British Companies are concerned, they are only too willing to give authors the benefit of their specialised knowledge and to welcome them to their studios."

One of the most popular of Mr. Bullivant's filmed novels was "The Woman Wins," made from a very successful serial which ran in *Lloyd's News,* and produced in film form simultaneously with the release of the story by Sir Arthur Pearson. This is one of the special features of Mr. Bullivant's method of work. He invariably arranges the release of his stories, either in serial or in picture form, to synchronise with the release of the film. In the case of "The Wife Whom God Forgot," another highly successful book, this has already appeared in the form of a 7/- novel, and the publishers, Messrs. Odhams, are printing a cheap edition of the book at 2/6, to come out at the same time as the film.

Mr. Bullivant has a particular affection for his latest production, "Blood Money" (with Dorothy Fane in the leading part). As a novel, it has already enhanced the reputation of its author, and as it also has just those characteristics which compose a first-class film, there is little doubt that its success is assured.

Mr. Bullivant is indefatigable in his endeavours to get exactly the right atmosphere into his books. He has travelled all over the world in search of local colour, at times even living the life of one or other of his characters. It is interesting to note that in his early years he was associated in journalism with G. R. Sims. He studied literature at Oxford, left after taking an Honours Diploma, and started on his career as a lecturer. His present medium of self-expression gives him a much wider public, and movie and fiction lovers are unanimous in their decision that he has chosen well.

IVY DUKE
Wires from Nice to congratulate us on the first number of "Movie-Land."

FAULTS OF THE FILM.

Why there are few good Picture Plays.

THE faults of the film are many—every patron of every picture theatre in the world can think of one or two in almost every film which he has ever seen.

So taking the faults for granted—to whom shall we ascribe the blame?

Is it the producer's fault, or the scenario writer's, or the star actors?

For small faults you can safely blame the scenario writer or the players. The faults of a weak story or of weak acting are evident to everybody.

But no industry in the world makes so brazen an attempt at putting the blame for mistakes from one man's shoulders to another as the "movies."

No one is responsible for anything. The bad picture is always some other fellow's fault.

As a wag suggested the other day, if the title cards of a film told the exact truth, nine out of ten would read something like this: "Mr. Golden Nugget presents Miss Stringer Pearls in 'Her Second Set of Uppers,' written by Jack Underwood from a suggestion by Grace Remington, and re-written six times by our own scenario staff to meet the approval of Mr. Golden Nugget and Miss Pearls, and later completely revised by the Director, Mr. Silverscreen, with the assistance of Mr. Cutting, and finally edited, assembled and titled by the Messrs. Nugget, Underwood and Silverscreen, their wives, neighbours and intimate friends, and approved by Miss Pearls and the office staff."

But the fact is that for a really bad picture the producer, and the producer alone, is to blame. And the reason why there are so few good picture-plays is that there are so few good producers.

Nine out of ten producers of the present day have too great a sense of their own importance.

They fog the author's story with an over-elaboration of "stage sets." Their gorgeous settings convey an impression of the lavish manner in which money has been spent on the production, but leave the audience cold and unimpressed; vainly groping for the threads of the drama amidst a sea of "props" and "effects."

Photography, too, has been overdone, although a producer would faint with horror if he heard you say so. A good photo-play naturally deserves the best possible players, the best possible photography, and the best possible production in every way, but after all "the play's the thing," and a good play nowadays

is often spoilt on the screen by the producer's efforts at " pretty " photography.

The technical side of the business has been overdone, to the bewilderment of the audience. " Close-ups," " double exposures," " fade outs," and chopping and changing of scenes have been carried to such a pitch that the story becomes almost impossible to follow for anyone except the most experienced picture-goer.

The producer is after one thing—his patrons are vainly hoping for another.

The producer wants to display his art, his lavish expenditure, his marvellous stage pictures.

His patrons would like to see a strong story, simply told and sincerely acted, in a setting which is adequate but unobtrusive.

When the setting ceases to swamp the story—when the story is stronger than the setting—we shall find fewer faults with the film, and more good picture-plays.

NAMARA,

The bright star of the operatic and concert stage, and recently enlisted for the screen. She brings her tremendous individuality into her workaday costume. Azure blue brocaded silk pantaloons and cunning coat, overalled with a sun-shaming yellow and orange kimono, a gift from old Japan. This is the garb of the great singer when she tucks herself away in a garden corner of the Guy Bolton home at Great Neck, which echoes to the thrills and cadenzas of " Thais." She is to sing the role in New York shortly. In private life Namara is Mrs. Bolton.

Our Short Story.

FOOLS' PARADISES.

OF course, she was really ecstatically in love with Arnold Fitzgerald. Catty May Hartnell had assured her she was living in a fool's paradise. What matter? Arnold and she had everything in common. Everything. Their souls were set to the divine harmonies of poetry and music. . . .

But it was curious how the nice, legitimate, conventional comfort of suburban domesticity enveloped her in such a mood as this. One half of her crying out for Arnold, scarcely able to bear the strain of waiting for the moment when they would be always together; the other half cooing, yes, positively cooing, in steadily contemplated connubial content. She took herself by the shoulders and looked at herself with the whimsically calculating, impish humour that characterised her moments of self-analysis. "The fact of the matter is," she told herself, "I'm one of that by no means limited company that pines to have its cake and eat it. Stephen and steak and security when I'm tired; Arnold and ambrosia when I'm out to stimulate and be stimulated. And no compassion for my Stephen or Arnold's Sylvia. I wonder whether—if I'd had a baby—. But I don't think so. There'd always have been two me's. Anyway, I'm committed now. Packed traps, burned boats. Here goes! The traditional letter on the dressing-table, and—"

"Hullo, Mavis! Going out? By jove, old girl, you do look 'fey' to-night! Got a kiss for hubby? Why? Bless her little heart, she's been arranging my doings!"

Mavis followed his gaze till her eyes rested on the neat piles of socks of various hues, collars ditto, ties, and so on, arranged on the top of the solid old mahogany tallboy that had belonged to Stephen's grandmother. She had always loved the way the light fell on the highly polished wood. . . . For the life of her she could not control two ridiculous tears, shed partly over Stephen's sartorial "doings" —the neat arrangement had been an irresistible eleventh hour whim of domesticity—partly over the grave of her own virtuous wifeliness—partly over the Great Tragedy that stalked in the wake of the innocents, the unsuspicious conjugal mates. Her Stephen and Arnold's Sylvia loomed largely through those facile tears, and the contraction of her heart was not without a furtive melodramatic joy.

"Mavis!"

The name fell haltingly, with the gauche tenderness of the naturally inarticulate man.

"Yes, Steve?"

"I wish I'd more to give you. You know what I mean—more of this confounded braininess. Wish I could be interested in the sort of thing you revel in. *Vers libres* and all that highbrow palaver. But these literary merchants put the wind up me. I don't know whether they're talking over my head or out of their giddy hats. . . . I say, Mavis, why did you marry me?"

Mavis held silent communion with herself. "This is absurd. If you launch on that eternal topic you're lost. It will end in supper at the Ritz and violets, and a sentimental hankering after the 'first fine careless rapture' that you've decided never can be recaptured—with Stephen; while Arnold, *avec* taxi-cab, is fuming at Piccadilly Circus." Aloud she said, to cover the mute colloquy. "I don't know, my dear. Because you were so comfy, I suppose. Such a rest." And even as she spoke she experienced once again a queer tightening of her heart-strings as she contemplated the abandonment of all this domestic ease; two nice, perfectly efficient servants; and a solidly beautiful little house; a good-looking husband, attractive even if he was a fool; all the accoutrements of enviable respectability.

Tap-tap! Tap-tap!

Stephen opened the bedroom door to admit the maid with a note. "Madam" literally clutched it from her. She would have known Arnold's dashing hand a mile away. She tore open the familiar grey envelope while the maid waited in indecision. Stephen watched the face he loved beyond his own understanding. It revealed nothing. But the long fingers were crumpling the letter into a tight little wad. "The wretch," said Mavis slowly, with contemplative emphasis. "The miserable wretch."

"Is there any answer, Madam?" ventured the maid.

"Answer? What do you mean?" Then, recovering her poise as she realised the interrogation in her husband's eyes: "No, Kate. No answer."

As the door closed again upon their *solitude à deux*, Mavis threw her arms about her husband's neck, all their white slenderness revealed by her distractingly charming *déshabille*. "I shan't go out, Boy, after all," she said. "We'll have a nice little dinner somewhere, and you shall make love to me. That *wretch* can't send my new frock after all, and I refuse to go to May Hartnell's in anything else."

* * *

Stephen never forgot that evening. It was the happiest of his life. He could never understand why Mavis had been so particularly and irresistibly adorable. How should he know, brave simpleton, that he had literally, by the grace of the god of propinquity —and self-preservation—caught an outraged heart on the rebound.

If he *had* known—or suspected—a short notice which appeared in his daily paper on the breakfast table next morning would have completed his enlightenment. A notice intimating, in brief, that Mrs. Arnold Fitzgerald, the wife of the clever young poet who had already contributed to modern literature a dainty sheaf of polished verse, etc., etc., had received a cabled intimation that she had inherited a substantial fortune from an unknown pork-packing trans-Atlantic relative.

* * *

But Fate is not such a grisly harridan, after all. And it would seem that she really does reserve her fools' paradises for the dear and honest fools.

FRISSE-POULET.

Tom Reynolds, "The Granger" Mirth-Maker.

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36, RATHBONE PLACE, W.,
as he will give you all the advice and help you require. Believe me, yours faithfully,
Secretary, Women's Employment Column.

SUNDAY CHRONICLE

An important institution is the Victoria Cinema Studio, which has been in existence for seven years, and is the only one of its kind in England. It has produced seven stars now featuring in British Productions.

DAILY MIRROR

Calling at the Victoria Cinema Studios, Rathbone Place, recently, *The Daily Mirror* found a number of embryo Mary Pickfords deep in the intricacies of making-up, a by no means becoming process, involving the use of much yellow paint.

PICTURES AND PICTUREGOER

GILLETTE (Putney).—You should be quite safe in going to the Victoria Cinema Studios, Rathbone Place, London, W. We have already recommended them after investigating.

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—Extract from SUNDAY CHRONICLE.

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DRINK AND ENJOY

LIPTON'S TEA

FINEST THE WORLD PRODUCES

TECHNIQUE WITHOUT TEARS.
A PEEP INTO THE FUTURE.

By Leila Lewis.

MISS LEILA LEWIS
(One of the best-known figures in the film world.)

WHAT is the future of the film? It is no easy question to answer. The possibilities of the film are legion. We who are in the film world to-day can but promulgate our ideas, and our highest aim should be to form the stepping stones on which the next generation can climb higher and get nearer to an ideal.

The portable projector, which is among the most recent of the by-products of the film industry, has in itself opened up innumerable new vistas of thought.

When the portable projector first came to this country its price was somewhere in the region of fifty guineas, and, therefore, not within the reach of the popular pocket, because a film projector, like a gramophone, is but the initial outlay; and films must be bought or hired just as gramophone records are bought or hired.

There is no film lending library, and the people who handle this portable projector business do not yet realise that it is no use having good goods unless you let the world know you have them.

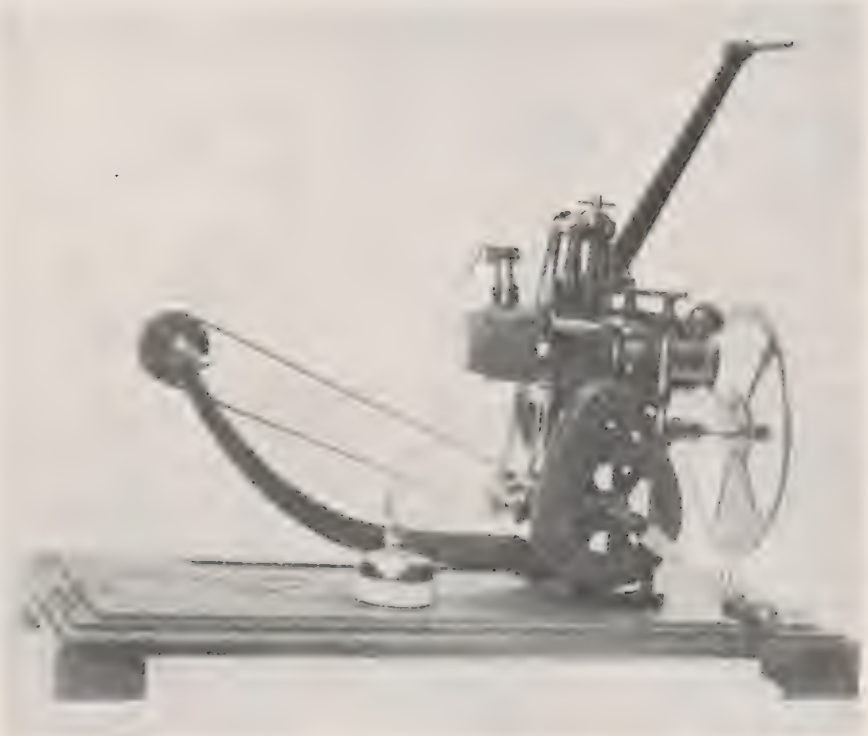
It is only by selling an enormous number of these home projectors that a film lending library becomes practical and inexpensive.

That this particular branch of the industry will develop is inevitable.

There is already a projector on the market at as low a figure as £19, and these portable projectors are absolutely fire-proof. There is no more risk of fire from them than there is from an ordinary electric light or iron, and they are worked from the ordinary electric supply in the same way as an iron might be, and were the throw not limited tc a ten foot picture, would probably be in universal use. Here, again, there is a possibility of perfecting this method of projection to supersede that now being used in ordinary cinemas. And there is soon to be a new projector on the market called the "Spirograph," weighing eleven pounds, which will go into a lady's handbag.

Experiments with non-flam film are nearing perfection every year, and there is even a rumour of film printed on transparent paper. If this ever materialises there is a prospect that we shall all have our home projectors for which we shall have our little roll of topical film delivered every morning, so that we shall see the news in moving pictures while we eat our breakfast in our own homes.

SIMPLET PORTABLE PROJECTOR.
Can be worked from an ordinary light or accumulator at a cost of a penny an hour.



A NEW FRENCH TYPE OF PORTABLE PROJECTOR.

The future of the topical film is in the home; but the future of the screen drama will always be in the cinemas because it will never be possible to produce new feature films for the comparatively limited home audiences. It will always be more practical and economical, as well as more interesting, to see new dramas specially presented at a theatre run for that purpose.

These portable projectors take standard film, so that when the dramas have had a good run round the theatres of the country they could then be hired through the lending libraries for home entertainment.

In cases where there is no electric supply in a house, the projectors can be worked off ordinary lighting accumulators similar to those used in motor cars, and the amount of electricity they consume is only about sixpence for five hours.

This is just the beginning of film entertainment in the home. Who can say what developments the future may see?

The portable projector will not compete with the cinema any more than the amateur photographer has injured the professional photographer, rather it has made the amateur more keen on the work of the professional and more appreciative of good results.

The future of the cinema will be largely influenced by special presentation and music for films, such as we had in London for "Broken Blossoms" and "Earthbound," and as they have for nearly every big film in the United States.

Education by means of the film is another thing that is inevitable.

A few months ago I was present at a large girls' college during the screening of some travel films, among which was one of Calgary. The Headmistress, who sat next to me, confessed that she had been teaching from old text books, and had not realised that Calgary was a large industrial town. She had always supposed it was a little village in Canada. Immediately she became not only a convert but an enthusiast for education by film.

Geography, history, botany, science and more subjects than I have space to mention could be taught more easily and effectively by film than by our old-fashioned methods, and here again the portable projector makes it possible to show films in a classroom.

The most popular model of all the portable projectors we have is the one that looks like a suit-case and weighs only 25lbs. It works off an ordinary electric plug and has a self starter and re-winder.

With all these new inventions and with the certain improvement of every existing branch of the film industry, looking into the future I can imagine a state of things that to the lay mind must seem crazy. But in the future of the film industry nothing is impossible.

THE SUIT-CASE TYPE OF PORTABLE PROJECTOR.

DON'T CUT IT SHORT!

No apology needed for the "Topicals." By Philip G. Kinnaird.

THE cinema theatre has at least one advantage which the legitimate stage can never possess. Unlike the drama, the film can show reality without the frills of impersonation, and has, when intelligently handled, a definite purpose as a vehicle for the rapid distribution of news.

The crowds which have been thronging to see the film of the Prince of Wales' tour through Australia should have given all the proof that could be wanted that the general public takes a keen interest in the screen version of current events, if the popularity of the topical scraps which are included in the programmes of most cinema theatres was not sufficient indication. I use the word " scraps " deliberately and of set intent. Over and over again one hears regular movie enthusiasts say : " How I wish they would make more of the topical gazette !" Or, " I do like to see what is actually going on in the world, and the film is so much more satisfying than an ordinary photograph."

It is, however, true that the camera man who is to be entrusted with the screening of current events must have special qualifications. Quite apart from a facility with the camera he must possess an acute nose for " news," and be able to appreciate which of the incidents that make up any function, whether large or small, are likely to prove most effective when reproduced on the screen. Moreover, it is by no means the really important things that are necessarily the most popular with the cinema audience. Quite often it is the apparently trivial incidents which make the best photographs in the daily illustrated papers; and the same principle applies in like measure to the screen. Anything which interests or amuses the ordinary person; the arrival of some celebrity from abroad, the shopping crowds fighting for bargains at the sales, or the sartorial peculiarities of Cabinet Ministers, are as suitable subjects for the topical film as for the daily paper. The exhibitor, however, does not always agree with or cater for his public. He cannot hear the shriek of the news-hungry audience for a good sound meal, nicely seasoned, of day-to-day happenings. He is convinced that a very scrappy hors d'œuvres of " topicalities " is all that is good for his patrons, and hurries on, almost with apology for intruding the hors d'œuvres at all, to the solid fare provided in the serial story which occupies such immense space on the movie-palace hoarding.

No one has ever been known to walk in a "topical" film. The operator is so impressed with the idea that the topical feature is a necessary evil that must be dispensed with in the minimum number of seconds that he speeds up his machinery to a diabolical extent, with the result that even mourners at a funeral cover the ground at a good rollicking six miles an hour. If a man greets a friend and removes his hat, it is done in a flash, like the wax penny-men (now sixpence) sold on Ludgate Hill whose hats whizz off and on at the pulling of a string. A farewell kiss on a railway station is made to appear like a bang of Carpentier's left, and a small boy cycling in a London street is all too plainly a menace to the public safety. In the antique American farces, the old lady with the pram who ran over policemen and under ladders, leaving piles of debris behind her, worked her devastating damage at an extraordinary speed. The humour was very largely in the lightning-like rapidity of her actions.

Many of the topical films are serious attempts by serious photographers to record serious events. The theatre operator, however, treats them in much the same way as he handled the farcical experiences of the knockabout matron.

Exhibitors will have to realise that the importance of the news film is apparent to his patrons if not to himself; that they have the same zest of appetite for interesting news in the picture theatre as at the suburban breakfast-table; and that this aspect of the art of the screen cannot be overlooked by the man with initiative and a finger on the pulse of popular demand.

HINTS FOR SCENARIO WRITERS.

John Emerson and Anita Loos, the famous American collaborators, who have written many successful scenarios for Douglas Fairbanks, Constance Talmadge, and others.

THOUSANDS of film stories are needed every year. There are thousands of would-be scenario writers. Yet the number of successful *professional* scenario writers in this country, or in America, could probably be counted on one's fingers. Why is this so?

First of all, because in the early days of the film business, which was not so very long ago, the same man combined the offices of author, producer, principal actor, and, perhaps, camera-man and editor. Even to-day quite a number of producers prefer to write their own scenarios, or to re-write the rough ideas of others. I shall have more to say about this in a future article. But apart from this, a very large proportion of films are "home-made" in the sense that instead of being the work of one outside individual, the film, as produced, is the co-operative work of more than half a dozen highly-paid experts. The scenario-editor, the producer, the director, the "continuity writer," the film editor, and the chief "stars" all have a hand in the game, with the result that the original manuscript can only be recognised on the screen by the title and the "theme." This latter is another important point on which I shall have more to say in subsequent articles.

I had a letter only this week from a very well-known authoress now in New York, in which she says: "Here in America, it is almost impossible for an outsider to get into the charmed circle, no matter what literary reputation one may enjoy, because most of the scenarios which see the light of day are written in the studios; besides the fact that unless one is well acquainted with the director of a company one cannot even hope to place a scenario, even if the scenario editor accepts it. This has happened to me several times, when an acceptance by an editor in New York has not been confirmed in California." That this has been very largely general, not only in America, but amongst British firms as well, is only too true, but the situation is improving. Up to the present there has been a superfluity of cooks and the broth has suffered. But gradually the producer and the director are taking

less and less of the centre of the stage, and the writer is coming into his own. When all three work in perfect harmony we shall see the pictures for which we are at present waiting in vain. Another handicap to the would-be scenario writer just now is the craze for screening nothing but well-known novels and plays; but this will not last for long. Many of the book plots are bought principally for the main title and the name of the author. It stands to reason that the name of a well-known writer has poster and publicity value. But it does not equally follow that his or her novel is going to make a good subject for the screen. A carefully-written *original* movie plot, presented with an eye to the limitations of the camera, written by an author of inventive talent, will please an audience more than the average novel or short story.

The latter carry plots, more or less strong, but hidden away in a wilderness of words. It should never be forgotten that film-writing is not like any other form of the literary art. To write successful scenarios you need not be an author. You need not have what is called a "literary bent." Indeed, a facile pen is as often as not a fault in film writing rather than an asset. The powe of "word spinning" is just what is *not* required for a film play. A film play is based on action, not on speech. So long as you can "explain" a story in such a way that other people will be able to "see" it, you are half-way towards writing a scenario.

The big firms nowadays, both here and in America, have no use for a completed picture-play except from recognised experts who are familiar with the studios and the players for whom they write and have the technique of the business at their fingers' ends. What is wanted is what is called in film circles a "detailed synopsis"—that is just a brief outline of the story—sufficient to explain the action, a list of characters with descriptions of them, and a list of places in which the scenes are laid. This should not occupy more than three or four sheets of paper, for the shorter it is the better chance it has of being read.

If the story strikes the producer's fancy he will accept it on the evidence of this "synopsis" alone. He will then arrange to write the completed play himself from your synopsis, or he will get one of his staff scenario writers to do it. He may even ask you to do it yourself if he thinks you have sufficient technical knowledge. But quite probably he will arrange to have it written in the studio with your collaboration. For a real photo-play "scenario" is a highly technical affair running to pages and pages of manuscript which nobody without an intimate knowledge of the technique of film production could possibly write.

Director John Ince is bent on teasing Viola Dana. He knows that if he gets her bathing costume wet her scene will be "off." But he seems determined to damp her bathing shoes, at least!

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PROPHECIES AND GRIEVANCES.

By D. Leigh-Bennett.

(EDITOR'S NOTE.—Mrs. Leigh-Bennett asks for specially written film scenarios. Mr. Cecil Bullivant (on page 23) pleads for screen "adaptations" of plays and novels. It would be interesting to hear what producers have to say.)

IF I were a cinema magnate I would practice the art of prophecy; the cinematographic part of me would live at least ten years ahead. For in the screen we have an art that is unhampered by traditions, and has not yet evolved its own technique. Enough crude and rather exciting spade work has been done to establish its popularity, and I imagine the worst mechanical difficulties have been solved.

Like all young things, the cinema is all potentiality. It may, like the child, grow up cramped and thereby imitative, or it may show quite fresh, adventurous ideas—win converts by sheer vitality of spirit and originality of outlook. It is a toss up—one way or the other—with what we call "up-bringing" as the most decisive factor in the case.

Thus cinema magnates and producers have in their keeping what might well become the most dynamic, educative force of modern times. Some of them may think it has already reached considerable maturity. But has it? Is it apeing its forbears—the photographic portrait maker, the stage—or is it reaching out to something truly individualistic? Is it trying to amuse, to inform, and to animate in a way peculiar to itself?

Because, unless the cinema is going to be peculiar, unless somebody will cultivate its characteristics, realise its limitations and visualise its possibilities, it will become quite ludicrously futile; in fact, speaking generally, it is perilously near such futility to-day.

Where is the cinema authority who will analyse the special functions of literature, the stage, the press, the schools and the screen, seeing where they are complementary and where they clash? For in that analysis is the successful development of film photography, its immense possibilities and strict limitations, its actual worth as an art form and an educative force. They all influence our minds and our emotions, but as their methods are different so, to some extent, are the effects.

The stage, for instance, can portray character better than action. The screen can represent action in a manner quite impossible on the stage. The press can inform us and make us think; but the cinema can do both these things, and make us *remember* what we have thought or what we have been told. Literature exercises our imagination. The screen, leaving nothing to our imagination, is inclined to stultify this invaluable faculty. Yet where the schools stuff children with facts that never grip them because their young minds have no data, no experience or mental picture to make these facts take on reality, the cinema can give them entrancing life and colour. The lesson is not only learnt at once; it is remembered because it has been seen and *felt*. Then, movement or gesture is the very essence of cinema acting, but in dramatic art acute emotion can be conveyed without movement by a simple inflexion of the voice. History, on the stage, must be condensed and fragmentary and psychological. History, on the film, can be spread over centuries. No canvas is too big for it. Its *métier* is realism of the most intense and detailed order.

Therefore, whenever the cinema portrays life in a manner suited to its special opportunities and limitations, it does something distinguished, something to justify itself. But, whenever it misses those special opportunities, or ignores those limitations, it becomes a dull, pretentious piece of trickery. Thus, the cinema is almost always dull and ineffective when it turns lazily to plays and novels that were never written for the film.

In ten years' time all our favourites will be spoilt for us, and then where will these producers go for their plots? For who wants to have their own vivid, intensely personal conceptions of their favourites in literature overlaid by some different interpretation; or well-known, well-loved endings altered; or scenes and situations that still hold their first romantic quality ruined for ever because the filmed environment is quite different from the picture stored in one's memory? This re-dishing up of plays and stories that were meant to be listened to or read (*not* watched in silence) is a poverty-stricken, makeshift business, however brilliant the acting, and however careful the mounting may be.

Some day somebody will come along and show us films of quite a different order, and pantomimic acting with quite a new technique. Startling things will be done with new, perfectly legitimate photographic trickery. Producers will take whole centuries and epochs for their setting (as Griffiths has indicated), and the artistic standard will be really set by wordlessness.

I think everyone feels that some fresh development is overdue; that the *average* film is just a piece of morbid mechanism; that the average audience only refrains from being actively critical because the entertainment (?) is cheap. We all live hoping. In our hearts we are quite confident that some day the love episodes will be more restrained, less embarrassingly sentimental, that the vulgarity and garishness will be cut out, the solecisms rectified, that a little wit and even healthy satire may be introduced.

We grumble (do producers know how much we grumble?), but we go. How long we shall continue to go mainly to grumble is worth the consideration of film financiers.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE THEATRE.

By Mrs. Gordon Craig.

"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA."

PERHAPS we are not "a nation of shop-keepers" after all! for whenever I meander out to Hammersmith and wend my way, almost automatically now, towards the Lyric Theatre, I generally find it full, and always attended by a most appreciative audience.

In fact, to rid myself at once of my only grievance I would say, *too* appreciative, in that their appreciation is shown by an inordinate desire for "encores," which should not be encouraged. It is, to my mind, rather a pity; unworthy of the perfectly artistic spirit of the rest of the production, and spoils the illusion a little.

Applause, appreciation, praise in any form, I am the greatest believer in, and I hate the people who would rather catch their trains than wait to give a full measure of applause to the artists at the end of a performance, but let it be kept till the end, or at most till the end of each act, particularly in such a delicate work as this; but in every other respect the little production seems to me perfect.

It is, of course, to Nigel Playfair that we are indebted for it, and he is undoubtedly one of the very few who could have given it to us so perfectly in the spirit of the original.

He tells us that he has adhered so far as possible (modern conditions permitting) to the original work, and that in the curtailment and selections he has been assisted by Mr. Arnold Bennett, and in the new settings for the songs and additional music by Frederic Austin in an effort to recapture the spirit of the original work, much of which was "improved away" in the representations of the early nineteenth century.

I can imagine those "improvements," and am rather glad I was spared seeing them. I venture to think that even the latter half of the century—wonderful artists and producers though we had—could not have given us this production in anything approaching the spirit in which Nigel Playfair and his little band of helpers have given it to us.

We are learning to be simple, and everybody is actually beginning to enjoy the lesson!

To begin with Lovat Fraser's designs for the scenery and dresses, which in their rigorous simplicity and sure touch (at a time when we are being given so much indiscriminate work in form and colour—WITHOUT *knowledge behind it*) are so satisfying!

I remember the first time I saw it; the opening scene seemed almost too good to be true—I dared hardly hope that the same spirit would continue throughout, but that is just what happens, even in the most crowded scenes, nothing strikes one as being spectacular for the sake of spectacle.

There are a great many highwaymen; they drink a great deal, and make a great noise; there are a great many ladies, therefore there must be a great many dresses, much dancing, and commotion—but all without any effort to impress us, or better still, the effort is so perfectly successful as not to be detected. It's just all delicious with exactly the right element of reality in it—it never tries to be quite real, and there is a strong flavour of the puppet show, the marionettes throughout, for which I think Mr. Ranalow's rendering of Macheath is largely responsible. I am rather loth to speak of the acting individually—it is so perfect as a whole—but it is, of course, around Captain Macheath that the play centres, and to whom the honour must first be given.

Such a wonderfully sure and withal so extraordinarily *light* a touch gives the spirit of the thing I think to all the rest, and he is nobly supported, in particular by his two "wives," Polly and Lucy, admirably played by Katherine Arkandy and Violet Marquesita, the former with a very rare and charming simplicity, and the latter with great strength and virility—which I remember striking me at first as being without quite sufficiently the touch of underlying humour found in the other parts, but her's is a performance which grows upon one, and is an excellent foil for the rest; both wives sing delightfully, and I think my favourite scene is that in Newark between these three. (Scene II., in Act II.).

But all are excellent.

Peachum I like best with Mrs. Peachum in the first Act—but they are excellently played throughout by Frederic Austin and Elsie French, who has the splendid abandon of the real artist and forces us to admire her acting almost to revulsion as the depraved old mother.

Then the music and songs! Who was it that grumbled that Shakespeare was "so full of quotations?" That's just what it is with the "Beggar's Opera." So many old friends keep turning up! and in Mr. Austin's new settings lose nothing of their familiar charm, and are, needless to say, quite perfectly rendered not only by the singers, but by the Misses Chaplin's incomparable little orchestra. (I was only sorry that it should be necessary for a large human placard to walk on and ask us for silence for the music played during the interval).

Much is owing also to Marion Wilson for the charming arrangement of the dances.

Altogether it is a little gem of art out of the ages with the enlightenment of our own time most skilfully added to it, and already well into the hundreds as to performances. Long may it continue to prosper and much more of the same stuff may Nigel Playfair come back to give us—at present he is in New York, where the Opera was produced last Thursday at the Greenwich Village Theatre, and received with the greatest enthusiasm.

My great fear is that Mr. Playfair's success may keep him long away from us! Our American cousins are apt to know a good thing! and I hear that he is staying over to produce for Mr. Schubert, now that the success of the Opera is assured.

There is to be a "Beggar's Opera" Ball at the Hyde Park Hotel on January 14th, when Captain Macheath and his ladies will sing and dance for us, and Elsie Janis will also appear.

The cause is an excellent one—that of the British Drama League— and the Ball promises to be widely patronised by the lights of the artistic world, and should be a most interesting occasion well worth attending.

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Greek Dancer in "Danse de Kassandra." A great U.S.A. favourite.

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CLOTHES AND THE WOMAN.

By Madame Halle.

I THINK it was to the younger generation that I promised to give a few hints on dress this week, and aided by my artist, who has sketched a very favourite frock for me, I will see what I can do for the *jeune fille*. We are accused of catering too much for young people nowadays, to the neglect of their elders, but it is an accusation to which I, personally, do not plead guilty, although it *is* a great delight to me always to make a frock for a young girl; her own joy in it is so inspiring to begin with, and mamma, I think, always reveals her most charming aspect when joining in the enthusiasm over the new frock!

The one we have sketched for you to-day is a very smart affair in pink brocade bound with black velvet, with a touch of the 18th Century about it which lifts it out of the ordinary, without in any way approaching "costume."

The brocade of which it is made has just enough stiffness of its own to dispense with artificial stiffening, except at the hips where it is essential, of course, and I venture to prophesy that the "hip movement," if it may be called so, has not yet reached its zenith, and that the coming season will see a more general adoption of it in one form or another. We are beginning to discover that it is rather "slimming" than otherwise, and it is a curious thing that however "slim" a woman is she always wants to look more so! "And perhaps I rather agree that you cannot be too thin to hang clothes on," as a great actress once said to me, though success in dress is not really a question of inches so much as of good proportions, good carriage and pose, or rather poise. The most beautiful dress can be spoilt by an ungainly carriage, and I question sometimes if English women, who are naturally graceful, give quite enough thought to this very important detail; whether they have quite enough vanity to do justice to themselves and the beautiful clothes they wear, sometimes so ungracefully. This, I feel sure, arises often from a sort of ultra-niceness that will not allow them to care enough about dress, to make the best of themselves. But it is a pity, and will always mean that French women, with their little added touch of art and natural vanity, and Americans with their religious regard for fitness and detail, will always take the lead in matters of dress in consequence. But this is a divergence! And it does not apply to the young girl, who needs merely to be her own natural self, to be successful; to her I would give other friendly words of warning, and beg her to be just a little more simple in her tastes.

I am of the opinion that most of the girls of the present day dress far too elaborately, they do not take enough advantage of their ability to wear the simple things which are denied to their elders; also they use, I think, too much trimming, and that a little indiscriminately sometimes, and hats that are far too old for them, although the bobbed hair has done much to eradicate this, as it narrows the hats one can wear down to the simplest possible affairs that will "stick on" without pins, generally a cap.

These can be perfectly charming. Personally, I am getting a little tired of the bathing cap variety, and am yearning towards something with a little more form, on the lines of the Russian "papha," modified, of course, to our everyday requirements, and made in the finest Persian lamb or astrachan, like one I have before me, is charming.

Another pretty type of hat for the moment is a perfectly plain swathed affair in Georgette—so thick as to be almost opaque, which can be in the nature of a turban or made on a shape with a circle brim turning up in front, but in either case heavily, but withal tightly draped, and ending in a long thick end of the material at the side or back, which the wearer twists round her neck at her own sweet will.

These hats are quite unrelieved by trimming, and look best in very dark navy blue, grey or brown, with only the fur on the coat or cloak worn with it as a relief. Blue with squirrel on opossum, or grey with caracul, or brown with black musquash, all look well. In black these hats are a little funereal because of their extreme dulness, which is their charm, and it is rather nice to get away from a black hat sometimes, isn't it?

Talking of hats, I am also very fond of them in one bright colour—in contrast to the rest of one's apparel, especially if the hat be small and kept religiously as the only note of strong colour in the "ensemble." This applies to an all-white scheme—with, perhaps, a cherry hat or to a dark one with a lovely blue, in either instance depending solely on the hat for colour.

It is a mistake so often made, and disastrously, I think, to imagine that things must match in colour, or that any given colour note must be repeated in different parts of the dress—in almost every case it is more effectively used only once, and not spotted indiscriminately over the rest of the person! That is one reason why a belt or sash is often so effective. Mercifully, we have only one waist!

These are only a few of the unwritten laws of dress, which only a very keen instinct for it as an art, and long experience teach us, failing which it is better to leave it in the hands of an expert. Even the little finishing touches and details are by no means unimportant, and should really be considered in the first inspiration of the dress as a whole; in fact, in designing I constantly work backwards from some small thing such as a belt or motif, and design my dress up to it. Nothing should be added as an afterthought—or thought of as anything but a part of the whole; in this way beautiful dresses are designed, and should rank worthily with works of art in fields other than "dress."

H. Halle

OUR PARIS LETTER.

PARIS, *January 3rd*, 1921.

MON CHER AMI,

I went round to see Victor Marcel the other day. I'm not sure if you were here at the time that he was filling the Alhambra every night and making Paris laugh with an excellent number called " Faisons du Ciné." The idea was to show that section of the public which labours under the fond delusion that just anybody can play for the movies, that like many things in life, film-acting is not as easy as it looks. Marcel used to get about twenty people up on the stage (there was always an excess of volunteers), read and explain the scenario to them, make them walk through it, and then would take the picture, which was projected at the next performance with free admission to anyone who had played in the film.

Really it was pricelessly funny, but particularly humorous were the people who tried " to get right into the part," and they appeared even more grotesque than any of the others.

* * *

It was Mr. Marcel who ran the " Scott Expedition " film over here early in 1914, the most successful British film that had yet been shown. But his great new "stunt" is the introduction of British films into France and *vice versa*. The Shackleton film, which he has been showing at the Cirque d'Hiver, met with even greater success than Scott's Expedition. Not satisfied with this, he took the film to the Adriano Theatre, in Rome, where it ran successively for one month, a record occurrence in the Italian film industry.

The Victor Marcel Co. also take the pictures for the " Topical Budgets " you see in England. This department is in charge of Mr. Gladstone Armstrong, the technical manager, who has made himself famous by obtaining, with the Vatican's consent, for the first time in history, a picture of His Holiness Pope Benedict XV., taken on the occasion of the visit of the Knights of Columbus.

* * *

In view of the " rapprochement " between the French Government and the Vatican, this film created enormous interest here, and showed the Catholic world what the Holy Father really looks like; but to all my enquiries as to how he had managed to obtain the necessary permission, Mr. Armstrong remained obdurate and would only smile wisely.

Mr. Marcel showed me his remarkably compact and complete plant, which permits him to project a film a few hours after its having been taken, and told me that he very shortly was going to extend it and his premises also.

Early next year this company is producing a big film of its own, which I am sure will help to maintain its high reputation for artistic productions. They also have up their sleeve an entirely novel system for . . . . . well, unfortunately, I am not at liberty to tell you yet. But when you hear that Mr. H. C. Grantham Hayes is the company's art director, I think you will look forward to a pleasant surprise.

* * *

By the way, you remember the little " artiste " whom you always insisted on calling Honeyblossom? Well, old man, you'd better go and get a bargain revolver from the Disposals Board . . . . . for she's married, and to the last man you'd think of, namely, to that fruity old rolls-roysterer who gave that very " compleat " supper party at which you first met her. She's given up all her movie work now, so as to have more time for shopping no doubt, while he has become far quieter, and is now absurdly deferential and meek towards her. But she still makes him take her " au Ciné," where they had quite a scene the other night because she accused him of winking at Mary Pickford in a picture. I think really she's very fond of him, thought she does rather " put him through it." For instance, yesterday he meets Honeyblossom on the doorstep, dressed in all her glory and on her way to dinner with " Someone who may be very useful to you, Peter," as she put it. Not wishing to dine alone in solitary state at the house, the poor fool has, of course, to blunder into the one restaurant in Paris where his wife and the "influential man" had foregathered, and there in access of absurd shyness, which seems to have paralysed him, he needs must sit at a table quite close to them, grinning idiotically at Honeyblossom, like a lad trying to give " the glad eye."

Now comes the fructiferous part. Finishing his dinner soon after them, the unfortunate Peter wanders out through the lounge on his way to the theatre. Well, the man was " very useful " to him, for choosing the moment when Honeyblossom was putting on her cloak, he stalked up to Peter and growled in his ear. " Voyons, mon p'tit, if ever I catch you making the googoo-eye at my wife again ever, I put you knock-out isn't it?" The poor old dear was so flabbergasted that he could only mumble something unintelligible and do the Iris fade-out.

* * *

" Ach Himmel," as the Huns say. Well, here's some more about him and his $100,000,000 Film Company. According to the " Intransigeant," the delegation of the " Chambre Syndicale de Cinématographie " which went to the Ministry of Commerce was informed there that the letters of introduction from

MLLE. DENISE GREY.

(Of the Paris "Gaité.")

that Department, which Mr. Himmel showed in the United States, must have been apocryphal, and that there were even errors in the letter-headings of the paper on which they were written. But Himmel, on the other hand, now denies ever having received any letters from this Ministry, and only admits to those supplied him by the Ministère des Beaux Arts.

This Department, in turn, however, asserts that no official mission was ever entrusted to Himmel, but that he only obtained an introduction to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommending him to the " Directeur des Services Français " in New York.

* * *

In spite of his statements with reference to the Gaumont and Pathé Companies, neither of these firms seem to have any knowledge of Mr. Himmel nor of the purchase by him of any options on any of their enterprises.

It would now appear that a " Société Cinématographique de France " has been registered with a capital of 150,000 francs in 100 franc shares, and

MADAME MARTHE RÉGNIER,
The distinguished French comedy actress now playing at the Théâtre, Athenée, Paris.

A charming portrait of MRS. SNOWDON HEDLEY, who has been living in Paris, and is now en route for the Riviera. Mrs. Hedley contemplates entering Movieland on her return.

premises in the Rue Bourdaloue in Paris. This, then, must be the company which Mr. Himmel mentioned during a speech last July, when the " New York Times " alleges him to have said that the French Government since founding the Société Cinématographique de France had always been desirous of bringing about an alliance between the French and American owners and producers; that for this reason it approved the Franco-American Cinematograph Corporation, which new company had already connected itself with several of the biggest producers in America.

* * *

It is furthermore stated in " The Moving Picture World " that Himmel had mentioned Mr. Viviani, a late French Premier, as being interested in the new company, in which he had agreed to accept the post of legal adviser. " The Matin," however, which first scooped " l'Affaire Himmel " as they call it, publishes an interview granted by Mr. Viviani to the correspondent of " The Information," according to which Himmel offered the late Minister fifty thousand francs a year to act in the capacity above-mentioned, which offer, however, was not accepted. In spite of this, it is said that his name was used, and, if this is indeed so, then you can form your own opinion of

the genuineness of an affair, the " dénouement " of which is rapidly approaching. " Faites vos jeux Messieurs !"

* * *

It may interest you to hear that your friend, Mr. Rosen, the Paris manager of the " Select Film Company," will in future attend to the distribution of the Stoll pictures in France. And here's another bit of news. The Musicians' Union here has decided to form a " Co-operative " for the exploitation of moving pictures, and as with the exception of the orchestra, their general expenses cannot be very heavy, the idea should be a success, in which case a certain number of theatres will be opened both here and in those towns of the provinces where the members of this union are sufficiently numerous.

Another company which has just been formed is the " Co-operative Universelle du Film Cinématographique " (C.U.F.), at Strassbourg, for the introduction of French and allied films into Germany

The French Government has, I see, asked Mr. Esparbés, that very well-known writer on the Napoleonic era, to write the scenario for a big film entitled " Le Poilu," which is to be produced by Mr. Gemier, who will have the Paris garrison placed at his disposition for this purpose. I am eagerly looking forward to this picture.

Yours ever,

" CLOSE UP."

FAIR SHOOTING.

(EDITOR'S NOTE.—Picturegoers are invited to send us their " gentle grouses." If of sufficient general interest they will be accorded space in this column.)

Beauty and Brains.

" The poorer the programme the dearer the seats " would seem to be the movie-house motto in certain areas. Recently, at about two o'clock in the day, I walked into one in London, not far from the City, and was treated to what was presumably regarded as my money's worth. It was a continuous performance, evidently for transitory visitors who drop in for an hour's amusement *en passant*. The films were appropriately short. Here their virtues ended. They were all of the tediously " comic " type, semi-clowning, semi-suggestive, and unfailingly in bad taste. I could have witnessed a far better performance in my small native provincial town for ninepence less. And the accommodation would have been better, too. Surely, more delectable fare could be served up even for an audience that changes every half-hour or hour? Let the films be short, by all means, but let them be sensibly entertaining. There are good filmable short stories from which brainy producers might choose material for the all-day continuous performance; brief dramas, humorous sketches, cameo-romances. There is nothing so exasperating as laborious and brainless " funniness."

* * *

And the Music.

Some of our smaller provincial theatres, on the other hand, who provid good screen programmes might find it worth while to instal better pianos—and pianists. Appropriate items well played on the piano are quite an endurable substitute for an orchestra. But what doleful discords wail and screech from some of our provincial movie-palace pianos ! There are good musicians to be had in plenty—at a reasonable price, of course—and the return in music as distinct from noise is financially well worth the investment. It is impossible to over-estimate the part that good music plays as a movie ally. Bad music is no more pardonable than scratched films.

The Unsporting Public.

In a box at a famous picture-palace the other day I saw typical evidence of the barbarism of a certain type of picture-goer. Despite the fact that every possible concession to cigarette-smokers had been made, not only in the matter of actual cigarette supplies and zealously attentive page-girls, but ash-trays, dead match receptacles, and so on, the floor carpet was thick with stale ash and burnt out matches. Enthusiasts who think well enough of the " movies " to sport a box might endeavour to cultivate a slightly more sporting social instinct for the sake of fellow-picture-goers, if not for the management, who spare no effort to cater for their comfort.

* * *

? ? ?

A short time ago, while I was watching a play in which cannibals figured prominently, I was startled to observe that several of these primitive gentlemen were *clean-shaven*. Has anyone heard of a cannibal barber?

* * *

Those Curls !

I love to see movie heroines with long, culy hair. Who doesn't? But it hurts my sense of logic to see a heroine tossing rebellious curls in moments of tense excitement. Recently, I observed on the film a lady of great charm and considerable strength of character actually toss back her silky ringlets two or three times while she was waiting breathlessly for a band of mutineers to issue forth from a ship and come to death grips with herself and her companions. I could understand her powdering her nose *after* the scuffle, out of sheer bravado, but when she is expecting every moment a sword to be pointed to her throat, she is not likely—at least, not usually—to fling a couple of curls coquettishly over her shoulder. Still, I liked her. They were such pretty curls !

THE GENTLE GROUSER.

Miss Margaret Morris.

MOVIES AS ATTRACTIVE EDUCATION.

Miss Margaret Morris, the famous dancer-teacher, discourses, amongst other things, of the film.

UNTIL I had talked to Miss Margaret Morris, education was to me an essential, a deeply interesting, and doubtless a controversial, but not perhaps a very thrilling subject. I can remember my own pot-hook days with mild interest but without emotion. Miss Morris, seated among cushions, which quite incidentally made a most effective background, in her Glebe Place house, makes one realise that " lessons " need be neither dull nor tedious.

She is an enthusiast, and her enthusiasm is of the vital kind that will leave no one in the neighbourhood out in the cold.

* * *

" What place," I asked, " should dancing be given in the early education of the very small child?" I had touched, it seemed, the subject nearest to Miss Morris' heart. " The very first," she said. " If a child learns first of all how to move with grace, to obtain perfect poise, and to appreciate rhythm, she will as a natural consequence develop poise of mind and balance of outlook. In my school I teach dancing before I teach reading or writing. The subject of next importance is painting. The children are all given absolute freedom of choice. They dance what they like; they paint what they like; but we insist that they shall be certain that they know why they like the particular forms of dancing or painting they choose. A sense of colour and design is developed by the exercises in painting even if the child may not become an academically accurate draughtsman. You cannot put into the mind of a child anything that is not naturally there, but we try to encourage all our children to make the most of the abilities they already possess and to bring out the qualities which lie underneath."

The children, I was given to understand, are encouraged to have their own views on every topic and to disagree, politely it is true, with any opinion that they do not hold themselves. " Rudeness is ugly," says Miss Morris, " and it is quite as easy to disagree pleasantly as unpleasantly. Our children are not allowed to be a nuisance to others, and are, if necessary, prevented from being a nuisance to other children. You see," added Miss Morris with a smile, " we keep our freedom within reasonable limits."

Miss Morris was going on to her theatre in Flood Street, where her Christmas pantomime was in progress. As I walked with her in the rain, holding over her an umbrella (which I am sure she despised), we talked of films. " It's rot," she said, " to pretend that films are bad for children. Education can be made attractive for them, and the films are able to teach a great deal. They can see what foreign places look like; American scenes give an idea of American life; and the topical gazettes do a great deal to widen the child's outlook. I do wish, though," she added, " that they would do something to those horrible murder stories. Virtuous old gentlemen think nothing of sitting through stories that literally incite to crime, and deck it out in the most attractive fashion, but curl up in horror at the dreadful immorality of a bare leg. Apart from these horror films, the film is most certainly a good thing for children."

If any proof is needed of the success of Miss Morris' theories it can be found in the dances which her children are giving at her theatre. The arrangement of the dances and the designs of the dresses are the work of the children themselves. They have been taught to think, and not only to think, but to express their ideas in concrete form.

MISS MORRIS'S WONDERFUL PUPILS.

"Help!" The tragedy of an automatic machine. Arranged and costumes designed by Freda Gaze. Xmas, 1920.

Elizabeth Ainsworth (age 14) in "Jack and the Beanstalk."

"AKZURAM."

A Dance composed and costumes designed by Elizabeth Ainsworth. Xmas, 1920.

ON WITH THE DANCE!

MARJORIE MOSS AND GEORGES FONTANA.

SYLVIA DE TELL.
A star of the San Carls Grand Opera.

M. Georges Fontana and Miss Moss, whose exhibition dances have been the star attraction at the Grafton Galleries for some time, are shortly off to Canada for a six months' dancing trip. M. Fontana would like to see the tango revived in London ballrooms again, but fears that in spite of its popularity in Paris it stands little chance here against the fox trot and the clattering drum. It is not, he says, either complicated or difficult, but English dancers are lazy about learning new things. At the same time, M. Fontana considers that the standard of ballroom dancing is higher than ever it has been.

EDUCATION AND THE FILM.

By E. Lascelles.

(EDITOR'S NOTE.—The opinions of contributors are not necessarily those of "Movie-Land." Correspondence is invited on provocative topics.

LIKE many another movement good in itself, the movement towards the development of educational propaganda on the film has suffered from the well-meaning efforts of reforming zealots. All art is educational in its effects. The fault of some of our educationists is that they have plunged in to divert the current of film ethics into the channels of their own ideals, instead of allowing it to mould itself normally in accordance with the development of public taste.

There is no more ludicrous figure on earth than that of the would-be public edifier, and he has flourished exceedingly of late in connection with film work. One of the greatest farces sprung upon the community during recent years is the aggressively "moral" type of film play, that is to say, the play which sets out to reveal the grisly consequences of vice and is tied together by a more or less improbable plot with a thread of dingy romance running through it.

It is doubtful whether these have ever effected any lasting good. They may have exercised a temporary restraint upon vicious inclinations, but men and women will never ultimately be bullied into morality. For the frivolous, indeed, the "moral" film play merely provides material for ribald jest and furtive snigger.

Psychologists tell us that you cannot destroy evil by the simple process of elimination. You must "build in" healthy thought to replace it. And this is where the "moral" film play fails entirely.

Another fad of the film educationist is "Nature Study." On one occasion I saw the movement of a *galloping* horse's leg shown in elaborate and slow detail. Can you imagine anything more grotesque than the spectacle of a horse moving at a snail's pace, but with his limbs taking the form of furious galloping? Naturally, the audience merely laughed. A gathering of veterinary students doubtless would have taken the thing quite seriously, but you could hardly expect a heterogeneous audience to appreciate it.

On another occasion I saw a picture demonstration of butterfly catching, preserving and packing. "I don't like this," I heard a girl say in an aggrieved tone, and I think she expressed the sentiments of the whole house.

There is, nevertheless, a wide field for educational work of the right sort on the film. But there is no justification for thrusting it upon a public which pays its money for entertainment. It is an abuse of the public confidence and as reprehensible as any other form of autocracy. Films which are exclusively educational should be listed on a specified programme and shown on the same understanding as other scientific demonstrations. From time to time manufacturing processes have been filmed and shown as part of the ordinary programme, but this, to my mind, is not a legitimate practice, nor is it a profitable one. Intelligent people may take a mild interest in cotton-spinning or soap-making, but they quickly become restive if the film is at all lengthy. One hears murmurs of "Funny sort of thing. What's it for?"—and an occasional sarcastic reply, "Oh, this is to *educate* us," and the dialogue ends in a derisive laugh or a muttered prayer that the film will soon be over.

It is of no use for highbrow educationists to thrust these films upon reluctant audiences in the hope that continual association with this sort of thing will create an appetite for it. It is impossible to provoke enthusiasm for discursive information. Artisans, however, will exhibit an eager curiosity in connection with new and strange processes relating to their own work, and there seems to be an opportunity here for business firms and manufacturers generally to break down, by the gentle process of enlightenment, that slavery to traditional methods which is still one of the greatest barriers in the path of progressive employers.

Apart from all technical demonstration, movieland, by its very nature, provides educative material of a widely varied character. The omnivorous camera accumulates the beauties of the whole earth and re-distributes them in picture form usually in a dramatic setting, and thus imposes upon a willing public many a pretty lesson on geography. The filming of historical books is similarly educative.

Pessimistic moralists have slipped into the unlovely habit of imagining sex-lure to be the main attraction of the film. A close study of movie audiences will prove the contrary. One of the most enthusiastically-received film-plays I have ever witnessed was a movie version of "Robinson Crusoe," which ended up on a very mild note of romance. The movie-public has an eager, and, for the most part, healthy curiosity for all the mysteries, wonders and beauties of life and Mother Earth. To satisfy this curiosity is to educate the public. But to attempt to standardise film education is as futile as it is impertinent. Our educationists will do well to bear this in mind.

CINEMA FINANCE: A Retrospect and a Forecast.

AT this season of the year we invariably indulge in retrospective reflections, and in sanguine hopes of a better future. It matters not in what branch of industrial activity our interests are centred, and our capital invested, the effect is bound to be the same. We look back on the past with more or less satisfaction, and to the future with more or less optimism. And it is well that this is so. Retrospects often enable us to put our finger on the mistakes of the past, and lead us to avoid a repetition in the future.

In the cinema world, and particularly in that section of the cinema world which is interested in the financial aspect of the industry, these remarks apply with full force—perhaps even more so than in the general world of finance. The past year has not been all that it might have been in any industry. The year 1920 began with a period of boom in the industrial markets which was reflected in the general advance in the shares of many cinematograph enterprises, but the pace was too hot, and hence it was that the latter half of the past year showed less movement in the way of new cinematograph enterprises. It must not be thought, however, that this slackening off was in any way indicative of a lessened interest in business on the part of the investor. The causes are further afield, and are to be found in dear money, heavy national taxation, and restrictions on the building of new structures to be used for purposes of amusement, or, in other words, luxury buildings.

* * *

The Outlook.

The past is behind us, and the investor is far more concerned with the possibilities of the future. When the stranglehold of state control, and interference, has passed away, and we think this happy consummation is nearer than some of the pessimists would lead us to believe, the "movie" business will leap ahead and develop far beyond the dreams of those timid people who, for so many years, persisted in regarding cinematography as a toy, and a pastime, instead of a great educational factor, and a power for good which would eventually permeate every grade of society in every civilised country of the world.

The average investor is gradually realising the potentialities of the cinema business, and the enormous scope for profit making which it offers, and there is little doubt but that very soon, when conditions improve in the general stock and share markets, a number of new ventures will appeal to the public for capital.

* * *

New Cinema Enterprises in 1920.

During the past year a number of cinema enterprises have made public issue of shares. Foremost amongst these were the Provincial Cinematograph Theatres, with a capital of £3,000,000, who offered, early in March, one million 10 per cent. preferred ordinary shares of £1 each at par. In May, Stoll Picture Productions offered 200,000 8 per cent. preference £1 shares, and 200,000 ordinary £1 shares. In June, British Famous Films offered 150,000 ordinary £1 shares, and in November, Stoll Films made an issue of 200,000 10 per cent. preference £1 shares. Other large issues, early in the year, were the Cinema Combine, in January, with 1,250,000 ordinary shares of 2/- each, and the General Film Renting Co. with 250,000 ordinary £1 shares at par. Leeds was well to the fore with the Scala (Leeds) offering 80,000 £1 ordinary shares, followed by the Elite Picture Theatres 75,000 preference 7½ per cent. £1 shares, and 50,000 ordinary £1 shares. Leeds and District Picture Houses also offered 140,000 preference and 70,000 ordinary shares both of £1 each nominal value.

An unusual and interesting proposition was that of Motor Cinemas which offered 75,000 preferred ordinary shares of £1 each at par early last year. The objects of the company were to equip motor cars with the necessary apparatus, and send them round to the country villages, and small towns where no picture house existed, and so bring amusement to the very doors of the village population. The idea is a good one, and should succeed.

Other ventures offered during 1920 were :—

New Royalty (Brixton), 240,000 in 5/- shares at par.

North of England Cinemas, 100,000 Ten per cent. preference £1 shares, 50,000 ordinary £1 shares.

British Riviera Cinedromes (Torquay), 25,000 £1 ordinary.

Finance—continued.

New Palladium (Stockwell), 160,000 ordinary shares of 5/- each.

New Globe Kinemas (London Suburbs), 82,000 Ten per cent. preference and 43,000 ordinary £1 shares.

Maidstone Pavilion, 40,000 Ten per cent. preference £1 shares.

Elite Picture Theatres (Hastings and Bristol), 52,250 Ten per cent. preference and 52,250 ordinary, both £1 shares.

Victoria Enterprises (Chesterfield), 50,000 8 per cent. preference and 30,000 ordinary, both £1 shares.

Rivoli Cinemas (London District), 150,000 £1 ordinary shares.

Tottenham Cinemas, 28,110 ordinary £1 shares.

* * *

B.B. Pictures.

The annual report of this enterprise was issued a few days ago, and shows that the profits from the 9th September, 1919, to the 2nd October, 1920, were £11,467. Transferred to capital reserve fund is a sum of £6,534, leaving £4,932 at credit of profit and loss. The directors recommend a dividend at the rate of 25 per cent. per annum on the amounts of capital already called up, and a balance of £723 is carried forward subject to possible claims for excess profits duty and corporation tax.

This company was registered in 1910 to acquire cinematograph theatres in Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, and other large Scottish cities, and a firm hiring business was also associated with the company. The authorised capital is £30,000 in £1 shares, £29,000 being preferred ordinary and £1,000 deferred. In February, 1920, a reconstruction scheme was carried through, and the above results are obtained by the new company.

* * *

Cinema and Theatre Share Prices.

Alliance Film Corporation—preferred 15/-, paid 4/-.
British Photographic Industries—17/6.
Cinema Combine—1/4½.
Moss Empires—8¼—¾.
North of England Cinemas—£1 preferred; £1 ordinary.
Palace Theatre—1⅛—⅜.
Provincial Cinematograph—1⅛—⅜.
Stoll Picture Theatre (Kingsway)—14/6.
Theatre Royal, Drury Lane—7/8—1⅛.
Variety Theatres—8/9.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Our Special Correspondent will be happy to answer Financial Queries relative to the world of the film on this page. Communications should be addressed to "FINANCIER," c/o "Movie-Land," 4-6, St. Ann's Chambers, Broadway, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

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NEW YEAR'S FESTIVITIES

PICTURES IN EVERY HOME.

News of the Day filmed while you sit at the Table.

Experiments in displaying cinematograph pictures during dinner at half a dozen Soho restaurants will be made next month.

"Operators with portable cameras which can be attached to the electric light will display topical pictures and news of the day," an English director of the English American Film Corporation told the Daily Sketch.

"No L.C.C. licences are required, because electricity alone supplies the light and the power, and consequently there is no danger of fire.

"The lights in the restaurants need not be extinguished either—merely dimmed a little.

"It is proposed to show events of the day in this manner in every home."

The World's Greatest Film Stars in Comedy and Drama can be shown on West End Cinema scales (size of pictures 10 x 8 x 6) including Chaplin, Pickford, Pauline Frederick, Nazimova, Pearl White, Anita Stuart, W. S. Hart, Clara Kimbal Young, Margaret Clarke, Theda Bara, William Duncan, etc., etc.

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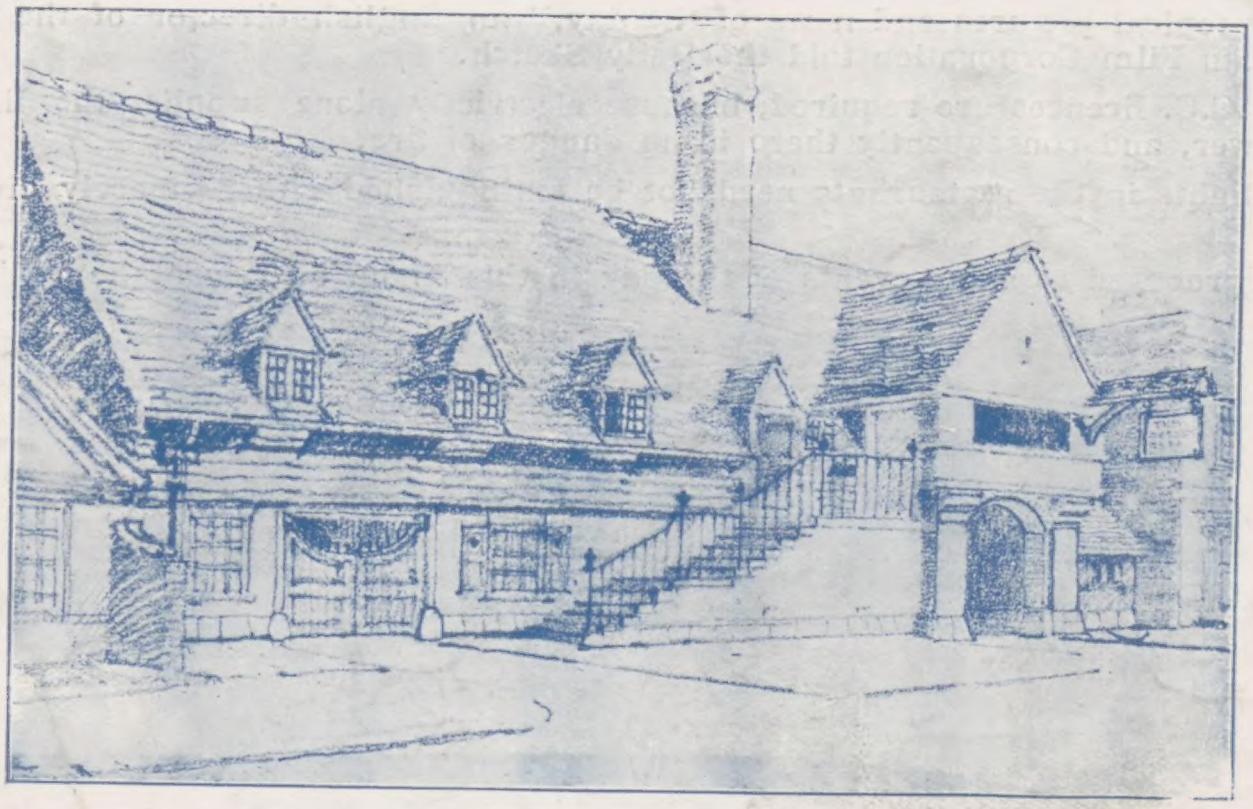

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